



AOC Newsletter



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VIDEO CONFERENCING UPDATE

By Stephanie Brown, AOC CS/IT Division



Throughout March 2009, the Administrative Office of Courts has hosted numerous Video Conference (VC) training sessions using our latest telecommunication system. With the introduction of AlacourtPlus this month, we have trained over 330 Judges, Judicial Assistants, Clerks, and Court Specialists using Video Conferencing in counties including Jefferson, Lauderdale, Jackson, Madison, and Etowah. This technology has proven itself to be very efficient as well as successful during its use.

If you are interested in conducting a meeting or a training session via Video Conference, please send an email to training@alacourt.gov with your meeting topic as well as your county and your meeting will be reserved.

Feel free to contact Stephanie Brown at Stephnie.Brown@alacourt.gov or Joey Hunt at Joey.Hunt@alacourt.gov with any questions you have concerning Video Conferencing. We look forward to continued success as we utilize Video Conferencing throughout the State of Alabama.

"Every one of my employees got to attend the AlacourtPlus training by simply walking to our jury room...no travel time, no long absence from the office, no travel expense, and it allowed attendance of all my staff. The training provided by Video Conference (VC) could not have been better had we been in the room with the presenter. We have also experienced great success with the status conferences conducted by the Jefferson County judges by VC. No travel time for attorneys or judges. The quality of audio and picture is excellent."

Jane Smith
Circuit Clerk
Madison County

TECHNOLOGY TIP!

Consolidating Alavault into AlacourtPLUS...

To use Alavault within AlacourtPLUS, the users ac0# and x# that is used to log into Alavault must be consolidated with AlacourtPLUS. To complete this process, complete the following steps:

- Log into AlacourtPLUS
- From the menu bar, Click on [My Clerk](#)
- Click on [Settings](#)
- Select the County you will be filing in
- Click the [Make Default](#) button
- Under Alavault User ID, select the [New](#) button
- Enter your Alavault username and password
- Click [OK](#)
- If you have access to any other folders (YO, JU or Private), Add them as well (one at a time)
- Click on [Consolidate](#)
- Click [OK](#) after the "Alavault settings have been successfully updated" message
- Close the [Settings](#) box
- Alavault will now be in the menu bar

MADISON COUNTY JURORS ENJOY NEW ACCOMMODATIONS

By Jane Smith, Circuit Clerk of Madison County

Madison County Circuit Clerk **Jane Smith** reports that the jurors in Madison County are now enjoying new accommodations while waiting to be dispatched to the various courtrooms. The Madison County Commission provided some additional space the courts are using as a multi-purpose room to include serving as a juror assembly room; an in-house computer training room; VC distance learning center and meeting space.



The “Starbucks” atmosphere lends itself to a casual environment for jurors to visit, play cards or games or put together a puzzle. Others may pass the time by reading some of the current magazines or other reading materials provided. On cold days, the hot chocolate and hot tea is particularly enjoyed by jurors; and of course, coffee is always provided. The twelve computers in the internet café is a favorite pass time for jurors, surfing the web and playing games. In addition, they are able to stay in touch with their jobs by periodically checking their emails. Many jurors bring their laptops and access the wireless network provided for them, or if they need a secure network, data ports and work spaces are provided.

Jurors enjoy the 50-inch television provided by the **Huntsville/Madison County Chamber Leadership Judicial/Law Committee, Class 21**. During particularly long waits, we may let down the electric screen and pop in a movie. Popcorn is popped in the microwave and jurors may enjoy a viewing of “Fools Gold” or some other movie favorite.

The room is equipped with the latest technology including overhead projector, electric screen, surround sound, wireless internet access and video conferencing equipment. Our in-house IT support person and trainer, **Sandra Baugh**, has provided numerous classes in basic computing: Microsoft Word, EXCEL, PowerPoint, and Outlook as well as Internet capabilities during non-jury weeks. In addition, we have had personnel from AOC and other trainers to come and offer classes on Alacourt, SJIS and other court applications.

Westlaw provided a trainer to come to Huntsville and provide hands-on legal research training for our judges and their support personnel. In addition, we have utilized this space for distance learning through VTC in such areas as Alacourt Plus; Landlord Tenant Laws, etc. **Judge Sherrie Paler** recently attended the Alacourt Plus training by VC and reports, “*I really appreciated the short travel time to Huntsville because I had more time to work in the office rather than being on the road for six hours. I think the video conferencing training was as beneficial to me as having live presenters.*” The space is also used for the weekly staff meetings for the Circuit Clerk employees.

Our jurors appreciate the extra attention given to making their visit and their stay at the courthouse comfortable and more enjoyable and court personnel are enjoying huge benefits from the hands-on computer training opportunities.



*I consider trial by jury as the only anchor
ever yet imagined by man, by which a
government can be held to the principles of
its constitution.*

Thomas Jefferson (1788)

Quote by Thomas Jefferson is written on the
back wall of the New Jury Room...



AlacourtPLUS Rollout is Very Successful

AlacourtPLUS is a client based case management system that is designed to help with court activities that the UJS Employee encounters on a daily basis. It is a business application that focuses on creating a more efficient work flow. AlacourtPLUS is a two-sided application: Clerk and Judge. The Clerk's side of AlacourtPLUS incorporates job duties such as the ability to view, docket, and flag documents filed in Alabama Trial Court.

AlacourtPLUS incorporates two applications into one. Alacourt and Alavault can now be utilized within one application. The Judge's side of AlacourtPLUS provides efficient case management by allowing the Judge the ability to view, set for hearing, and dispose of case documents filed in Alabama Trial Court.

Throughout the month of March, IT Support has conducted AlacourtPLUS training sessions using the Video Conferencing technology. This training has been very successful and we have received positive feedback from both clerks and judges. For questions concerning AlacourtPLUS, please contact IT Support at 1-866-954-9411 Option 1, then Option 5 or email us at ApplicationSupport@alacourt.gov.

"Jason Hodges presented the various parts of AlacourtPLUS to new users with a comfortable, easy-to-understand approach, while at the same time pointing out useful features to those of us who had piloted this new system. The ladies and men in my office came back from the training enthused, fired-up, and excited. I'm thrilled for the Alabama court system to be on the leading forefront with our ever-expanding and efficient technology for processing civil cases." Libby

Elizabeth Hamner
District Court Clerk
Tuscaloosa, AL



Just for Laughs...

Courtroom Technology



<http://www.offthemarkcartoons.com/>